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The Hacker Files

WORKING-CLASS HERO (4.0)

BY SHINER, SUTTON & BUCKINGHAM

HERO OF THE WORKING CLASS

THE SON OF THE WORKING CLASS
ENTRUSTED TO A PRODUCTIVE LIFE, EVEN
WITHOUT THE AID OF HIS WIFE
STILL THERE WERE DIFFICULTIES.
KNOCK KNOCK
YOU ARE UNDER ARREST
WHAT IS MY CRIME?
SUSPECTED TREASON.
BUT WHAT OF MY CHILD?
HE WILL BECOME A WARD OF THE STATE.
WAAA!
ALL IS FOR THE BEST.
YOU WILL SEE
A FEW WEEKS PASSED

HERO OF THE WORKING CLASS

AT LAST THE SON OF THE WORKING CLASS IS BROUGHT BEFORE A TRIBUNAL OF HIS PEERS FOR A FAIR HEARING.
HOW DO YOU PLEAD?
I... HAVE DONE NOTHING.
DO YOU DENY THAT YOUR WIFE WAS INVOLVED IN COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY HOOLIGANISM?
NO, SIR.
I TRIED TO REASON WITH HER. I HAVE NO LOVE FOR CAPITALISM.
SHE WAS SEDUCED BY DREAMS OF MATERIALISM. PERHAPS IT IS MY FAULT THAT SHE DID NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH TO SEE THE HOLLOWNESS OF THOSE DREAMS
THE TRIBUNAL NEEDED LITTLE TIME TO DEBATE.
YOU SEEM UNCORRUPTED BY HER TREASON.
THE FAULT LIES IN THE TIMES, NOT IN YOU.
THANK YOU, COMRADES
THE SON OF THE WORKING CLASS RETURNED TO THE FACTORY, CONFIDENT THAT HIS SON WOULD SOON BE RETURNED TO HIM.

The Hacker Files

WORKING CLASS HERO
PART 4

It's some kind of HOLDING tank, right here in the Digitronix plant
Not my idea of FUN But then its bound to be better than the Shanghai JAIL
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MARK BUCKINGHAM · INKS
DIGITAL CHAMELEON · COLORS
ROBERT GREENBERGER EDITOR

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The guy with the GUN is SUTCLIFFE I used to work for him A long TIME ago.
YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS, AREN'T YOU?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW SERIOUS
TRY ME.
FORGET IT, MARSHALL YOU ALREADY KNOW TOO MUCH I'M NOT GOING TO COMPOUND THE PROBLEM
WHAT'S TO LOSE?
FOR ME, NOTHING. BACK IN THE STATES ALL I COULD DO WAS FIRE YOU.
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT HERE.
PEOPLE DISAPPEAR HERE ALL THE TIME.
YOU HAVE TO KILL ME NOW YOU KNOW THAT.
GOODBYE, MARSHALL.

THAT WAS SMART.
YEAH, YEAH I KNOW.
YOU MUST BE YI. HOW'S YOUR ENGLISH?
WHO ARE YOU?
WE RE FROM DIGITRONIX U.S A
HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?
So this is the guy I come halfway around the WORLD to find Doesn't SEEM like much
Not to be loved by somebody like QING
But who am I to TALK? I used to be married to somebody who was too good for ME
WE'RE LOOKING FOR YOU YOUR GIRL-FRIEND--
QING?
THEN SHE IS ALIVE?

SHE'S FINE. SHE'S IN DALLAS.
TEXAS. YOU KNOW. U.S.A.
WE WERE SUPPOSED TO RESCUE YOU. ONLY...
...THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT.
YOU MEAN...
WE'RE PRISONERS TOO.
GREAT.
TELL US WHAT HAPPENED. WHY DID THEY LOCK YOU UP?
I STILL DON'T KNOW, EXACTLY. I WAS WORKING ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE...
"I TOUCHED SOMETHING INSIDE ONE OF THE MACHINES. AND IT TALKED.
"IT WAS A RECORDING OF WHAT MY FRIENDS HAD JUST SAID TO ME."
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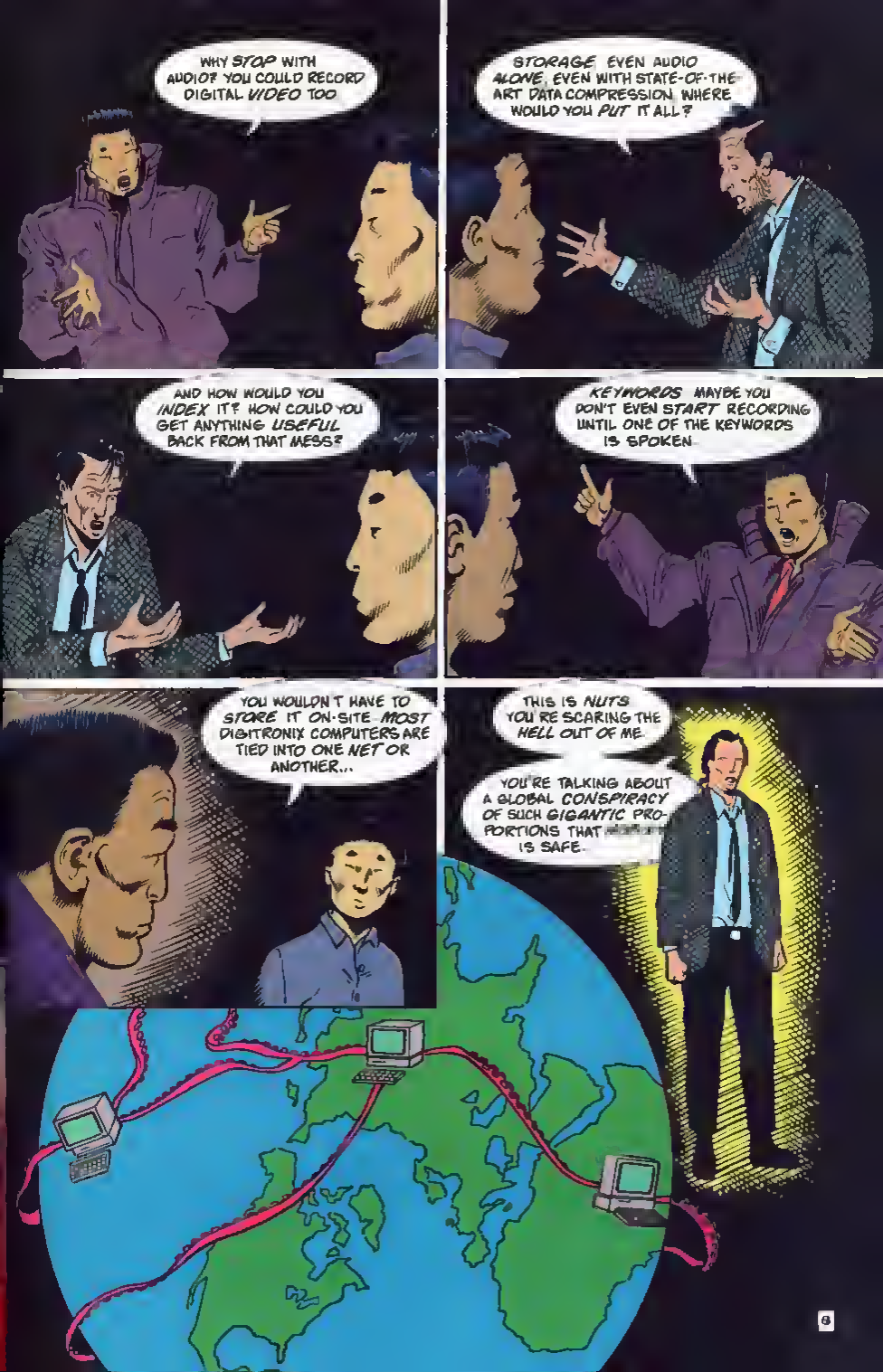
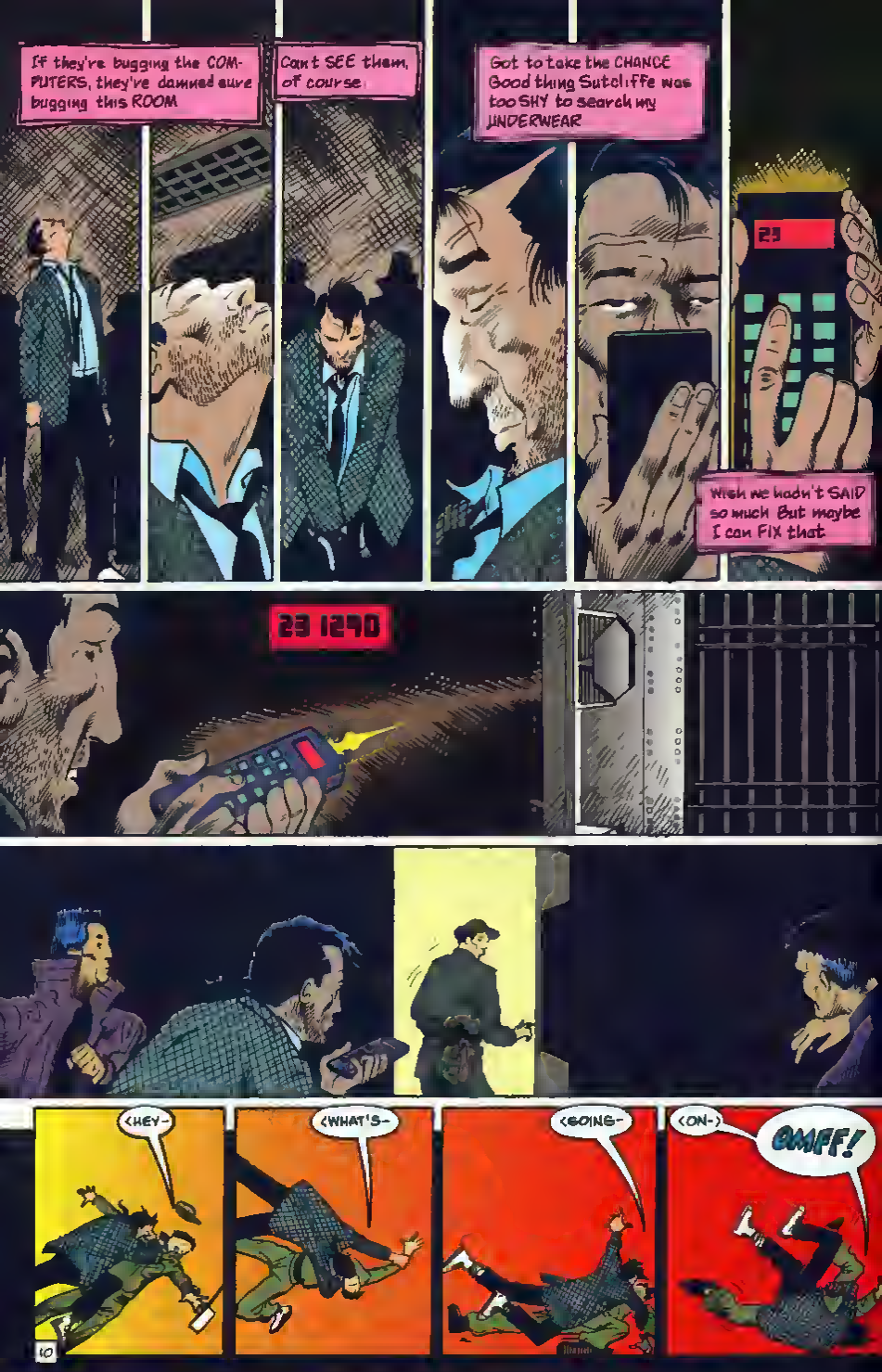
YOU MEAN, THERE WAS A TAPE RECORDER IN THE MACHINE?
NOT TAPE IT WAS PART OF THE MACHINE. SOMEHOW.
OH MAN...
ARE YOU THINKING WHAT I'M THINKING?
WHAT DID I SAY?
THIS IS TOO SPOOKY IF DIGITRONIX HAS AN AUDIO RECORDER IN EVERY COMPUTER, THEY COULD BE RECORDING
..EVERYTHING...


WHY STOP WITH AUDIO? YOU COULD RECORD DIGITAL VIDEO TOO
STORAGE EVEN AUDIO ALONE, EVEN WITH STATE-OF-THE-ART DATA COMPRESSION. WHERE WOULD YOU PUT IT ALL?
AND HOW WOULD YOU INDEX IT? HOW COULD YOU GET ANYTHING USEFUL BACK FROM THAT MESS?
KEYWORDS. MAYBE YOU DON'T EVEN START RECORDING UNTIL ONE OF THE KEYWORDS IS SPOKEN.
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO STORE IT ON-SITE. MOST DIGITRONIX COMPUTERS ARE TIED INTO ONE NET OR ANOTHER...
THIS IS NUTS. YOU'RE SCARING THE HELL OUT OF ME.
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT A GLOBAL CONSPIRACY OF SUCH GIGANTIC PROPORTIONS THAT [illegible] IS SAFE.

THAT SUPERCOMPUTER MY UNCLE IS WORKING ON IN TOKYO, THE ONE WITH THE 64 PARALLEL PROCESSORS.
THAT COULD HANDLE THE DATA.
YEAH, BUT THEY HAVE TO HAVE A WAY TO CONNECT ALL THOSE PHONE LINES WITHOUT ANYONE NOTICING...
THE VIRUS!
WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! CAN'T YOU USE THE--
SHHH!
YEAH, MAYBE.
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?


If they're bugging the COMPUTERS, they've damned sure bugging this ROOM
Can't SEE them, of course
Got to take the CHANCE Good thing Sutcliffe was too SHY to search my UNDERWEAR
29
Wish we hadn't SAID so much But maybe I can FIX that
23 1290
<HEY-
<WHAT'S-
<GOING-
<ON-
OMFF!
10

UNH!
YI! GET THE RADIO!
MMMMPH!
HURRY!
BUT I...
TELL THEM EVERYTHING'S OKAY.
I DON'T..
JUST DO IT!
(HELLO, OKAY, EVERYTHING HERE IS FINE.)
OKAY!

THAT LEAVES US JUST TWO PROBLEMS.
YEAH?
FIRST WE HAVE TO GET Y/ OUT.
THEN COMES THE HARD PART....
...GETTING OURSELVES OUT.
WELL, AS FAR AS Y/ IS CONCERNED...
...I HAVE THIS IDEA.

SHANGHAI AIRPORT.
EPARTURE GATES
KEEP THEM FOR A COUPLE OF DAYS, MAKE SURE THEY'VE BEEN SEEN ALIVE, IN PUBLIC, AFTER I GET BACK TO THE STATES.
THEN THE "ACCIDENT." I UNDERSTAND. BUT WHAT ABOUT TOHIRO?
UNCLE TOHIRO IS BEHIND THE ALEPH PROJECT ONE HUNDRED PERCENT.
I KNOW FAMILY'S IMPORTANT TO YOU PEOPLE, BUT THIS IS MONEY WE'RE TALKING ABOUT HERE.
AS FOR THE CHINESE KID, LET YOUR PAL FROM THE COPS HAVE HIM.
I LOVE THE WAY THIS IS ALL FALLING TOGETHER.
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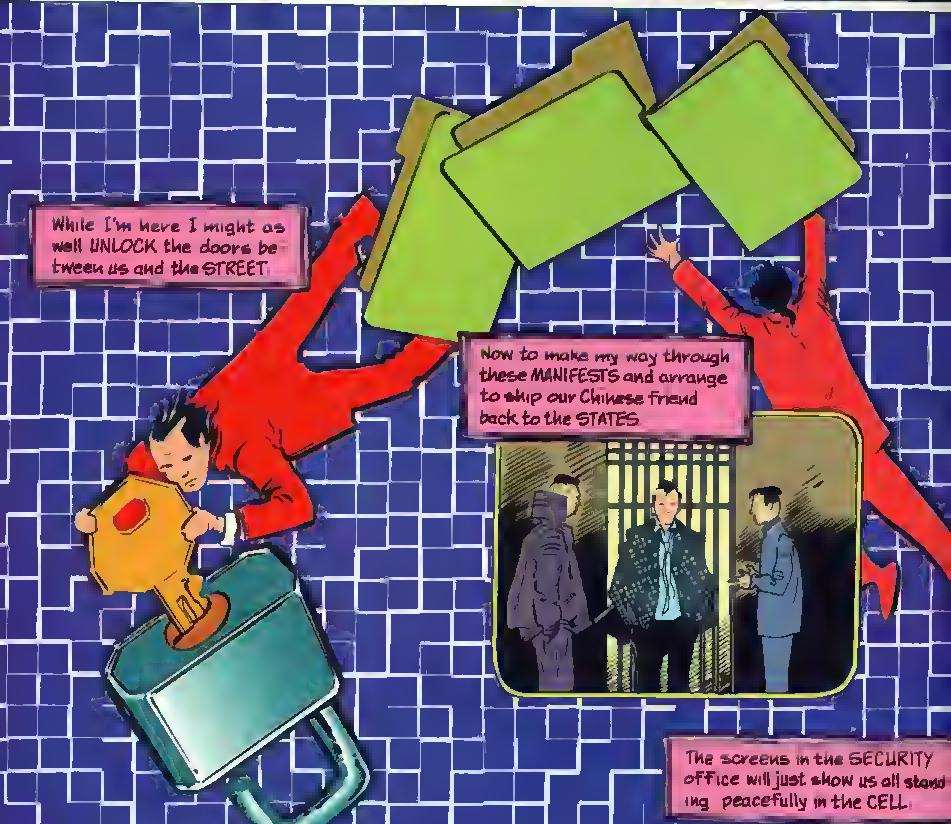
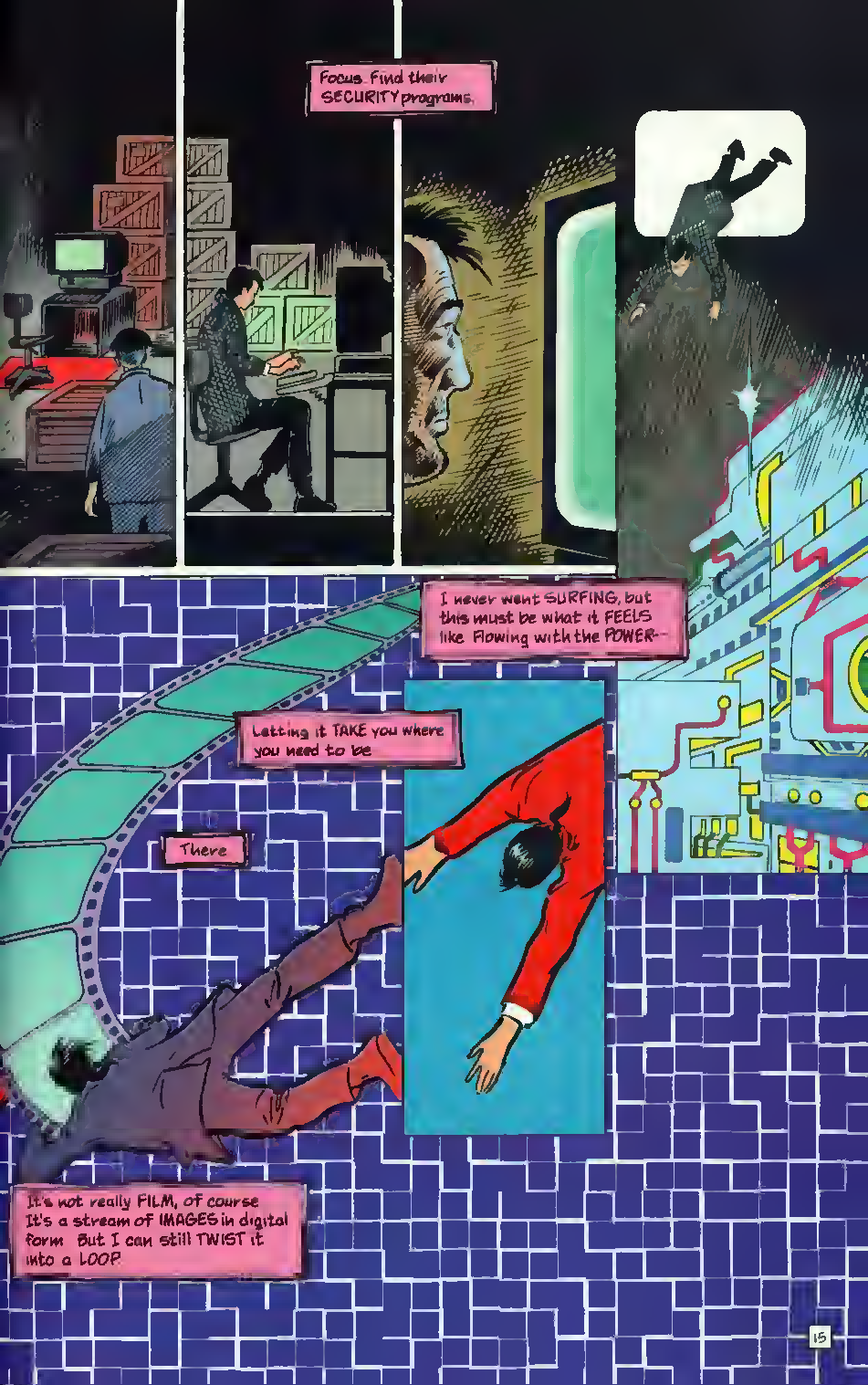
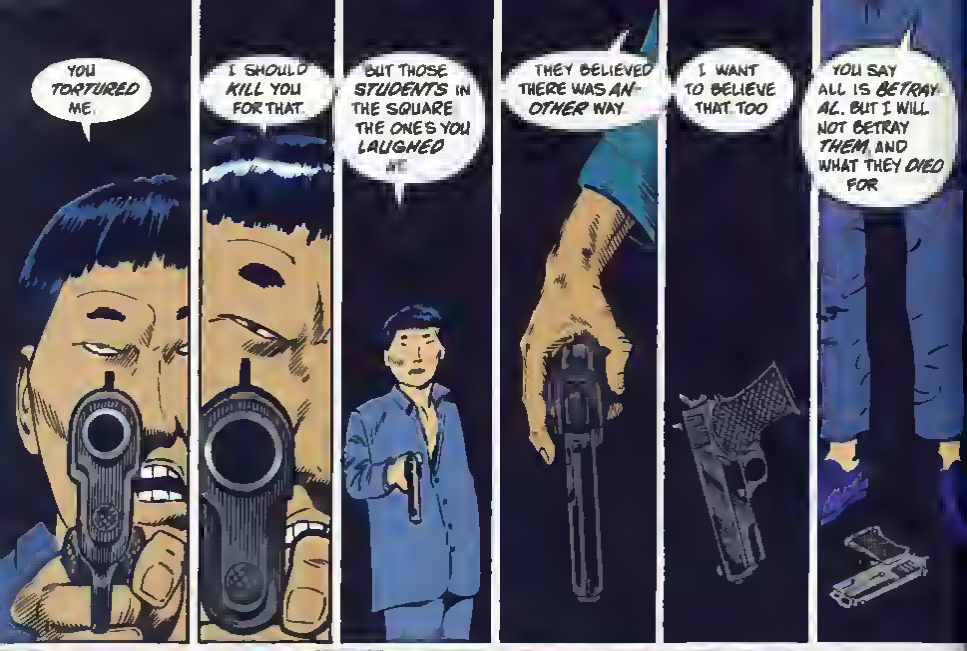
There may still be TIME to make this WORK But I have to get into the COMPUTER
FIND AN EMPTY AMCKING CRATE AND SOME BLANKETS
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
Like, WAY into the computer
I'M GOING TO TRY TO GET US OUT OF HERE


While I'm here I might as well UNLOCK the doors between us and the STREET
Now to make my way through these MANIFESTS and arrange to ship our Chinese friend back to the STATES
The screens in the SECURITY office will just show us all standing peacefully in the CELL


Focus. Find their SECURITY programs.
I never went SURFING, but this must be what it FEELS like. Flowing with the POWER--
Letting it TAKE you where you need to be
There
It's not really FILM, of course. It's a stream of IMAGES in digital form. But I can still TWIST it into a LOOP.

(WHY DO THESE SCREENS FLICKER?)
(IT'S NOTHING, OLD MAN.)
(YOU WORRY TOO MUCH. THE COMPUTER HANDLES EVERYTHING.)
(HAVE YOU EVEN CHECKED THE CAMERAS IN THE CELL?)
(I JUST DID.)
(WE ARE COMPUTER PROFESSIONALS. TIME HAS PASSED YOU BY.)
(TIME AND A DECENT MAYBE. HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD THAT ANCIENT UNIFORM?)
(I DON'T TRUST YOUR COMPUTERS. I'M GOING FOR A LOOK AROUND.)
(TRY NOT TO GET OFF ANY ALARMS.)
I HAVE SEEN MUCH, BUT THIS LOVE OF MONEY IS NEW TO ME.
I DON'T TRUST IT. I--
AHA.

THE COMPUTERS, THEN, DO NOT SHOW EVERYTHING.
ALARM
NOR, IT SEEMS, DOES THE ALARM WORK.
ALARM
THEN I WILL MANAGE ON MY OWN.
HALT!
WHAT DID YOU THINK, YOU ARE GOING TO BE MAILING HIM AWAY?
THAT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT, YEAH.
COME OUT OF THE BOX, PLEASE.
<DROP YOUR GUN.>
<YES? NOW WHAT?>
<BACK AWAY>
17


YOU TORTURED ME.
I SHOULD KILL YOU FOR THAT.
BUT THOSE STUDENTS IN THE SQUARE THE ONES YOU LAUGHED AT.
THEY BELIEVED THERE WAS AN-OTHER WAY.
I WANT TO BELIEVE THAT TOO.
YOU SAY ALL IS BETRAY-AL. BUT I WILL NOT BETRAY THEM, AND WHAT THEY DIED FOR.

YOU CAN CALL YOUR FRIENDS WITH GUNS IF YOU WANT.
ARE YOU CRAZY?
YOSHIO, WAIT.

OR YOU CAN STOP THE KILLING HERE.

I WILL TELL YOU.
I DO NOT MUCH LIKE THE MEN WHO RUN THIS PLACE.
TRUE, I HAVE SEEN PEOPLE CHANGE LOYALTIES ALL MY LIFE, FROM ONE SET OF IDEALS TO ANOTHER
BUT THESE MEN HERE HAVE NO IDEALS. ONLY A LOVE OF MONEY.
THAT IS THE WORST BETRAYAL OF ALL
COME. I WILL HELP YOU INTO YOUR PACKING BOX

THE SON OF THE WORKING CLASS CONTINUED HIS GOOD, PRODUCTIVE LIFE.
KNOCK KNOCK

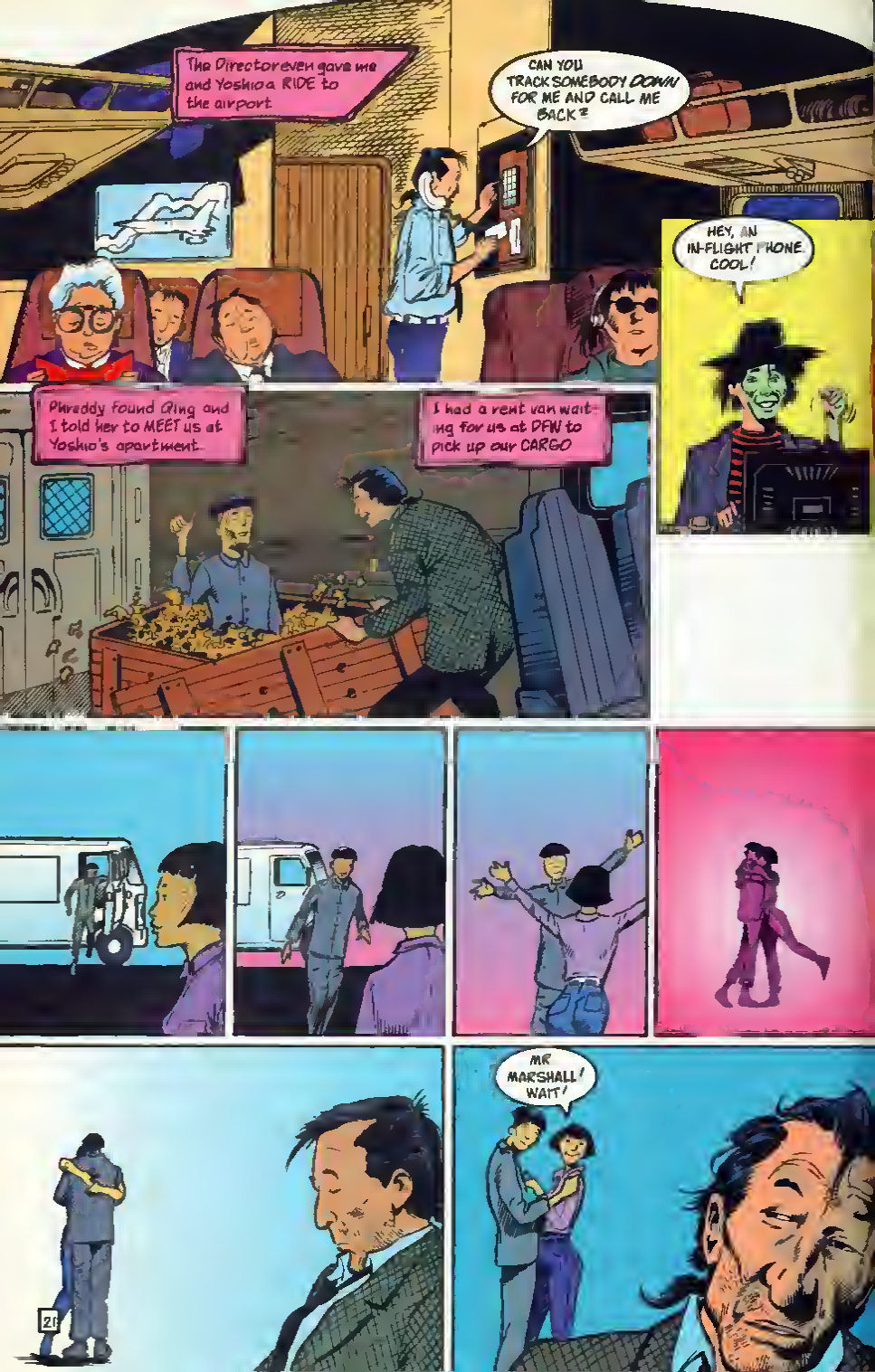
HUSBAND, I HAVE RETURNED.

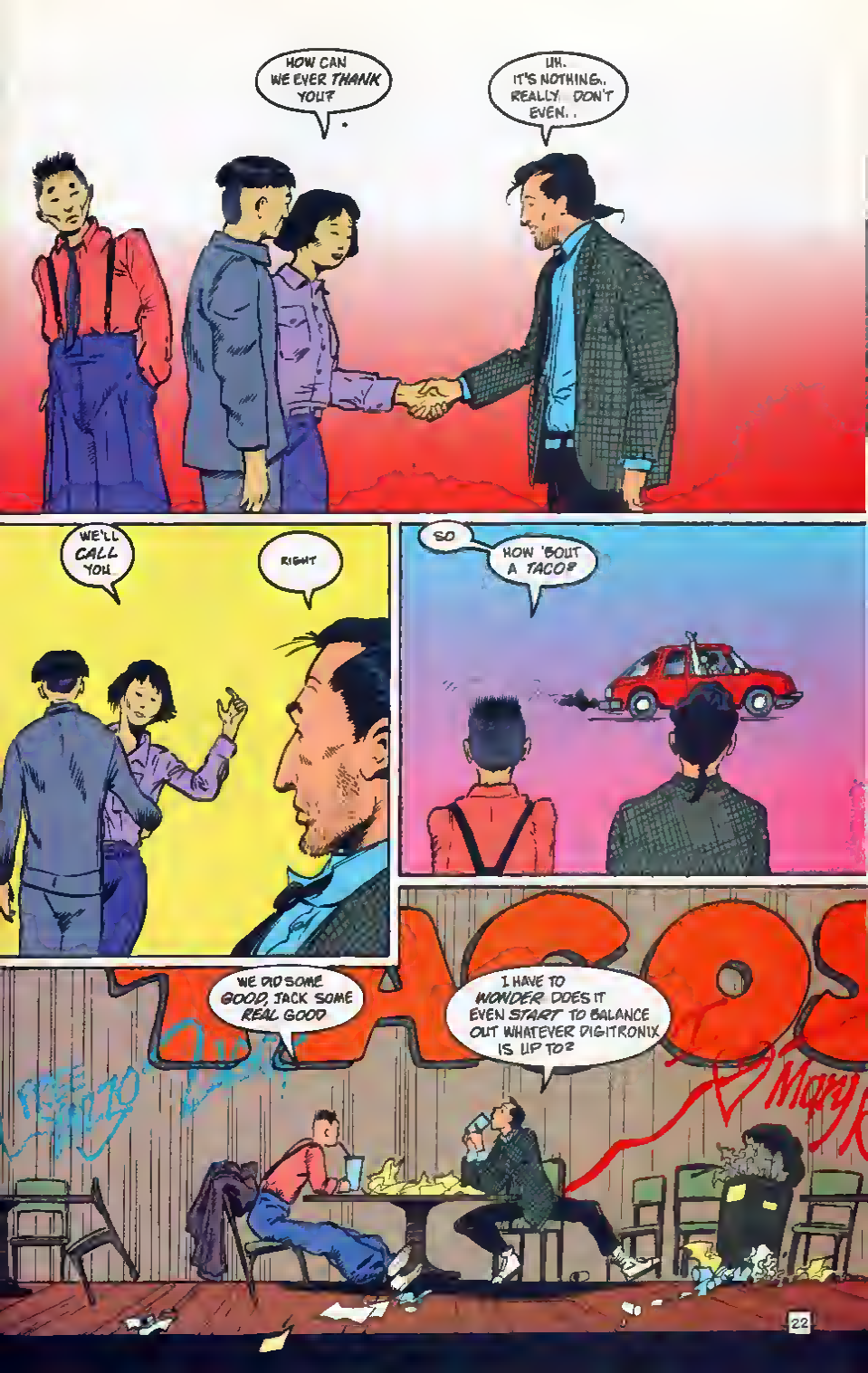
LIFE IN THE DECADENT WEST IS NOT FOR ME. LET ME PUT ASIDE THESE EXPLOITATIVE TENDENCIES...

...AND BECOME A SIMPLE WORKER ONCE MORE. IF YOU WILL HAVE ME.
OF COURSE

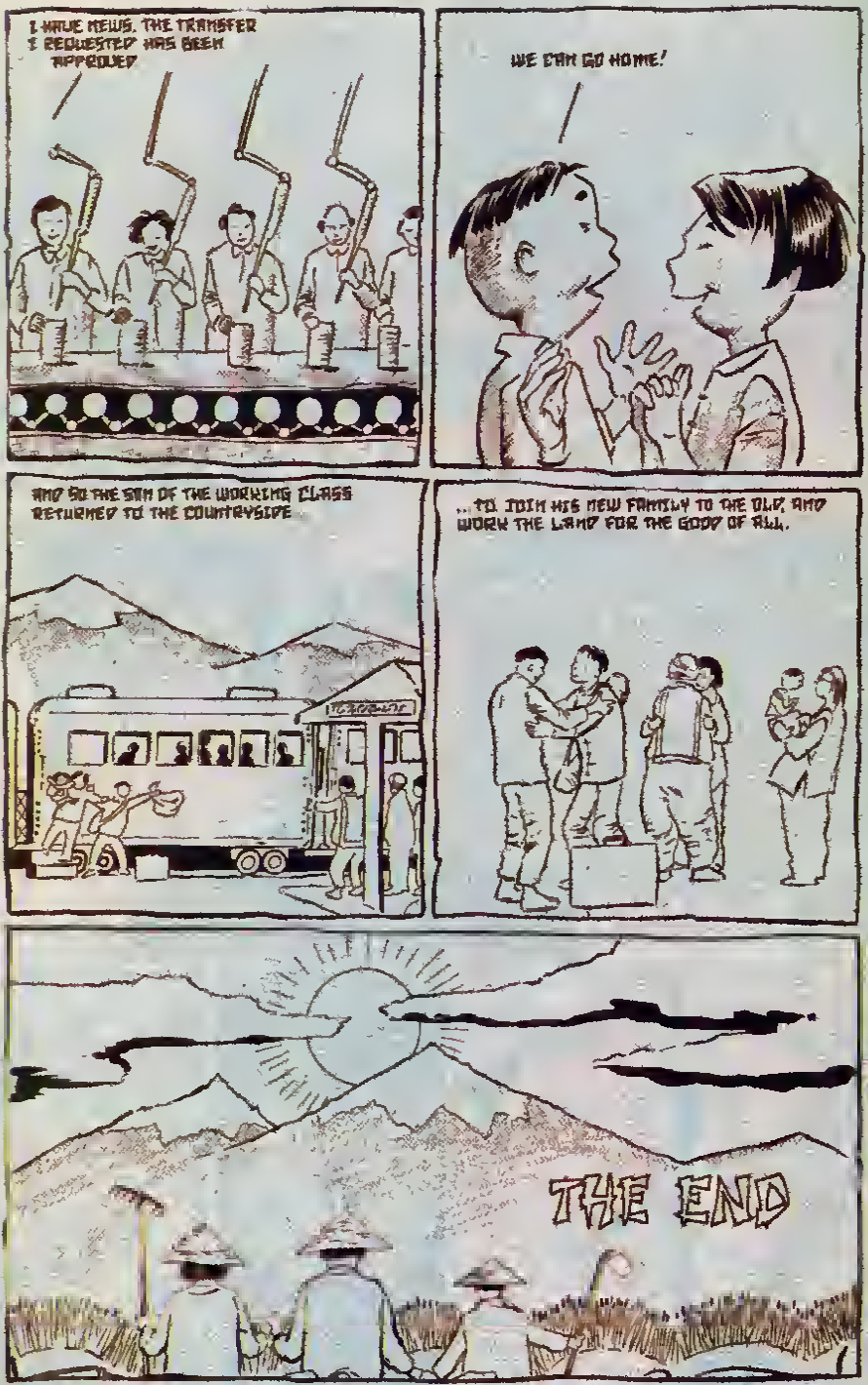
FREE ENTERPRISE IS NEVER FREE. WESTERNERS ARE SLAVES TO THEIR BANKS AND INSURANCE COMPANIES.

THINGS ARE NOT PERFECT HERE, BUT I KNOW NOW THAT IT IS BEST TO WORK FOR CHANGE WITHIN THE SYSTEM.


The Director even gave me and Yoshio a RIDE to the airport
CAN YOU TRACK SOMEBODY DOWN FOR ME AND CALL ME BACK?
HEY, AN IN-FLIGHT PHONE COOL!
Phraddy found Qing and I told her to MEET us at Yoshio's apartment.
I had a rent van waiting for us at DFW to pick up our CARGO
MR MARSHALL! WAIT!


HOW CAN WE EVER THANK YOU?
UH. IT'S NOTHING. REALLY. DON'T EVEN..
WE'LL CALL YOU
RIGHT
SO
HOW 'BOUT A TACO?
WE DID SOME GOOD, JACK SOME REAL GOOD
I HAVE TO WONDER DOES IT EVEN START TO BALANCE OUT WHATEVER DIGITRONIX IS UP TO?
TACOS

WHATEVER THAT IS.
WHEN I PUT MY EAR TO THAT DOOR IN SHANGHAI I HEARD SOMETHING.
ONE WORD.
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME?
THE WORD WAS "ALEPH." IT COULD BE THE KEY TO THIS WHOLE THING.
YOU'RE STILL INSIDE DIGITRONIX, YOU CAN WATCH SUTCLIFFE. MAYBE HE'LL MAKE A MISTAKE. MAYBE YOU CAN PICK SOMETHING UP
digitronix
WORLD INDUSTRIES
I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHAT HE'S UP TO..
...EVEN IF IT KILLS ME.
I WISH YOU WOULDN'T SAY THAT.


I HAVE NEWS. THE TRANSFER I REQUESTED HAS BEEN APPROVED
WE CAN GO HOME!
AND SO THE SON OF THE WORKING CLASS RETURNED TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
...TO JOIN HIS NEW FAMILY TO THE OLD, AND WORK THE LAND FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.
THE END